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ABSTRACT

The evolution of the Adult Education Act (AEA) in the last 25 years illustrates the progress of adult basic education (ABE) in the United States. A detailed look at the literature and outcomes of AEA-funded projects provides a sense of the effectiveness of 25 years of federal involvement. The passage of the AEA in 1966 led to the first systematic federally funded efforts for ABE staff training, special demonstration projects, and higher education involvement in ABE. During the 1970s, the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) used discretionary funds to support research efforts such as the Adult Performance Level study and competency-based adult education. A regional approach was spurred by staff development projects in the USOE regions. Although the regional experience revealed conflicts among local, state, and federal priorities, regional projects had a great impact on the professionalization of adult educators. In the late 1970s, USOE left funding of regional projects and staff development to the states. Lower funding levels in the early 1980s and few systematic dissemination efforts led to great variability among the states. Barriers to progress remain: shifts in federal priorities; changes in target population, program sponsors, and curriculum; lack of national standards; and overreliance on part-time and volunteer instructors. Addressing these barriers requires increased full-time positions, "linkers" to bridge the gap between research and practice, improved staff development and teacher training, and research and demonstration projects. (SK)

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Information Series No. 347

THE ADULT EDUCATION ACT: A GUIDE TO THE LITERATURE AND FUNDED PROJECTS

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FOREWORD

The Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education (ERIC/ACVE) is 1 of 16 clearinghouses in a national information system that is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education. This publication was developed to fulfill one of the functions of the clearinghouse--interpreting the literature in the ERIC database.

This paper is one of two commissioned by ERIC/ACVE to celebrate the joint 25th anniversary celebrations of the ERIC system and the Adult Education Act (AEA). The other, ***Ends or Means: An Overview of the History of the Adult Education Act*** by Amy D. Rose, provides a decade-by-decade review of the evolution of the AEA. Together, the two papers provide an important retrospective of the legislation and its results.

ERIC/ACVE would like to thank Meredyth A. Leahy, Dean of the Division of Continuing Education, Cabrini College, for her work in the preparation of this paper. Ms. Leahy previously served as Director of Continuing Education at Cabrini and as Command Education Officer and Adult Education Specialist in the Basic Skills Education Program offered by Temple University at U.S. military installations in West Germany. A member of the Commission for Adult Basic Education since 1973, she is a founding member of both the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education and the Pennsylvania Association for Adult and Continuing Education.

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Ray D. Ryan
Executive Director
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Training for Employment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Adult Education Act (AEA), the only federal legislation to focus entirely on adult basic and secondary education, has taken many forms in the last 25 years. Its evolution illustrates the progress of adult basic education (ABE) in the United States. This paper takes a detailed look at the literature and outcomes of AEA-funded projects to obtain a sense of the effectiveness of 25 years of federal involvement and to make recommendations for the further development of the field.

An historical overview depicts the state of adult education and the role of professional associations prior to the 1960s. The need for ABE teacher training and for state and local support is evident from this review. Following the passage of the Adult Education Act, the period from 1966 to 1972 saw the first systematic federally funded efforts for ABE staff training, special demonstration projects, and higher education's involvement in ABE.

These early experiences led to a focus on the regional approach, spurred by adult education staff development projects in each of the 10 U.S. Office of Education (USOE) regions. During the 1970s, USOE used discretionary funds to support research efforts such as the Adult Performance Level study, a controversial project that took a functional competency approach to the improvement of adult literacy. Competency-based adult education was debated throughout the 1970s, and competencies for ABE teachers with a movement toward certification raised concerns about the voluntary nature of both the adult learner and the part-time adult educator, both of whom were in danger of becoming externally directed by bureaucratic requirements. Although the regional experience revealed conflicts among local, state, and federal priorities for ABE, regional projects had a great impact on the professionalization of adult educators.

In the late seventies, USOE discontinued funding of regional projects and staff development, and special projects became state responsibilities. Lower funding levels in the early 1980s and few systematic dissemination efforts led to great variability among the states. It appears that much staff development is taking place without a clear picture of how it should be done and whether it is effective. Indiscriminate funding of demonstration projects continues without systematic efforts to set standards, measure their impact, or examine their value.

Barriers to progress remain: shifts in federal priorities; changes in target population, program sponsors, and curriculum; lack of nationally agreed upon standards and expectations; and overreliance on part-time and volunteer instructors, leading to isolation, marginalization, and high turnover. The following recommendations address some of these barriers:

- Increase full-time positions
- Create "linkers" who can bridge the gap between research and practice

- Improve staff development and teacher training
- Construct incentives and reduce barriers to participation in staff development and training
- Identify, select, and fund research and demonstration projects worthy of further study and replication

Information about adult basic education and the AEA may be found in the ERIC database using the following descriptors: *Adult Basic Education, Competency Based Education, *Demonstration Programs, *Educational Legislation, *Federal Legislation, Government Role, Part Time Faculty, Regional Programs, *Staff Development, State Programs, *Teacher Education. Asterisks indicate particularly relevant descriptors.

INTRODUCTION

The Adult Education Act of 1966 set the stage for a gradual development of an effort by the federal government to address adult illiteracy in this country. It has been one of many federal legislative efforts to approach the problem; however, it is the only federal legislation to focus its full attention entirely on adult basic and secondary education. The Adult Education Act in its many forms sustained the delivery of direct services, provided for professional development and teacher training, and funded demonstration projects, program development, and research efforts.

The act has undergone a number of changes over the last 25 years. Its priorities were adjusted and resources redirected, giving consideration to new and varied target populations, encouraging major changes in approach and curriculum, and expanding the delivery system many times over.

This publication traces the paths taken to develop the resources and capabilities necessary to advance the field--staff development and teacher training programs and special projects designed to develop, demonstrate, evaluate, and promote new and innovative programs and practices. First, a brief look is taken at what preceded the Adult Education Act of 1966, in particular the extent to which the field of adult education was prepared for what was to come. The second section provides a review of the first 6 years, 1966-1971, when teacher training, innovative and special demonstration projects, and graduate programs in adult education attempted to stay even with a rapidly growing program. Third, a review of the regional projects, 1972-75, is provided. This was a period when some say the field of adult basic education grew professionally more than at any other time in this 25-year period, fueled not only by the challenges and debates spawned by the regional efforts but by the debate and controversy surrounding particular projects and research funded by USOE during 1970s. Section four covers the period of 1976 to the present, during which responsibility for adult education staff development and teacher training, as well as for innovative and special demonstration projects, rested for the most part in the hands of the state directors and state departments of education. Section five reviews some of the more recent literature related to ABE, much of which has contributed to the resurgence of interest in adult literacy at the federal policy making level and has affected to some extent the 1991 National Literacy Act. Finally, conclusions are drawn and recommendations offered.

SETTING THE STAGE: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The need for adult basic education was known for decades prior to the 1960s, but early attempts to gain federal government support for a national effort to deal with illiteracy, other than the short-lived Works Progress (later Work Projects) Administration in the 1930s (Friedman and Knight 1971), were generally ignored and met with little success. As Jules Pagano noted in a presentation to adult education state directors and university professors, "our national disgrace lies in the fact that we have pretended for a long time we have no illiterate Americans" (National University Extension Association 1967, p. 62).

What may have been the first substantive, but short-lived, acknowledgment of illiteracy as a national problem came during World War II when the armed forces provided literacy classes geared to produce soldiers who could read and write at a fourth-grade level. By the end of the war, however, three-quarters of a million persons had been rejected because their educational deficiencies could not be overcome in the 13-week program (Cook 1977).

Ambrose Caliver, Specialist in the Education of Negroes in the U.S. Office of Education, reported that of the 1 million Negroes inducted into the Armed Services during World War II, one-half could not read or write at the fourth-grade level. He added that approximately 10 million adult U.S. citizens--10 percent of the adult population--were functionally illiterate. Caliver tied illiteracy to other social problems of the time such as poverty, disease, malnutrition, low wages, and occupational insufficiency (cited in Daniel and Holden 1966).

In an effort to address the problem, Caliver directed a project from 1946-48, funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Known as the Hampton Institute, the project produced experimental materials; workbooks in reading, language, and math; and a syllabus for an introductory course for teachers of adults. It also introduced nearly 1,000 teachers to new methods and techniques (Cook 1977).

The debate about professionalization of the field was well underway in the early 1950s. Even though there seemed to be general agreement that adults were different from children and youth and, therefore, the teaching of basic skills to adults required special knowledge and skills, the question was posed even then: Could programs be staffed with volunteers to a large extent, or should the field be more rapidly developed, with full-time people devoting their careers to adult education with salaries comparable to those in other professions? Support for the latter can be found in the December 20, 1951, ***Educator's Washington Dispatch***, which published a list of the 10 most pressing tasks for education in 1952. Among those 10 appeared the following:

> Begin training a core of workers for adult education so that the movement can take on a new scope and power, emphasizing how adults may learn to make decisions in a democracy rather than merely acquire

> facts. (Cited in Sheats, Jayne, and Spence 1953, p. 399)

However, in 1952, when some 270 colleges and universities were training individuals for elementary and secondary schools that enrolled approximately 28.5 million children and youth, little attention was paid to the preparation of teachers of adults, either within or outside of the profession. At a time when an estimated 30 million adults were enrolled in some form of adult education, only 12-14 colleges and universities offered programs leading to a master's or doctoral degree in adult education (Sheats et al. 1953).

Departments of education explained their failure to provide adult education training by citing the notion that placement opportunities were extremely limited, at least on a full-time basis (an observation that plagues the field even today). In the meantime, administrators of both public and private adult education programs complained that because higher education was not preparing men and women with special competence in the education of adults, they were forced to "fill important professional jobs with people who lack understanding of the historical background, present scope, and unique problems of the adult education movement" (Sheats et al. 1953, p. 400).

It was already apparent that most teachers of adults were trained as elementary or secondary teachers and lacked preparation specific to adults as learners, or they were specialists in a subject but lacked training in any aspect of teaching and learning altogether. What little training was provided came in the form of summer institutes and workshops of short duration, a pattern that continues to influence adult basic education teacher training. In 1951, 36 institutions offered such programs. Syracuse University began a program to train individuals to write instructional materials for adults. At about the same time, the Laubach method became popular and was used in Tennessee to teach illiterate people how to read via televised lessons; Baylor University began training volunteers and initiated the first undergraduate curriculum in literacy education (Sheats et al. 1953).

The Adult Education Association of the USA (AEA USA) began publishing ***Adult Leadership*** in 1952 and quickly gathered 17,000 subscribers. However, a review of the first three volumes, collected and summarized in ***The Leader's Digest*** (AEA USA 1954, 1955, 1956) revealed that not a single article was specifically directed toward adult basic skills instruction. Instead, the journal, true to the association's view of adult education as a voluntary activity, focused on community action and group processes, providing guidance in how to plan meetings and programs, set goals, lead discussion and question-and-answer sessions, and develop leadership skills. Then came the 1960s--

> We were operating then in an environment in which it was fashionable to speak of a "social consciousness" and a number of fundamental social issues were addressed through new social policies. . . . Illiteracy was a social problem during the 1960s to the extent that it was viewed as a prerequisite for persons who had been disenfranchised to reap their share of the rewards of a bountiful nation. It was the key to moving up and out of the ghetto, up and out of labor-intensive jobs and up and out of the ranks of the poor. (Fingeret 1988, p. 67)

The 1964 appropriation for adult basic education (ABE) in Title IIB of the Economic Opportunity Act put adult literacy on the list of national concerns for the

first time. Shortly thereafter, two studies were published, the first by the AEA USA (Firoza 1966) and the second by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE 1965). Both reported a need for ABE teacher training, but neither made any mention of training for program administrators.

AEA USA surveyed over 600 nongovernmental agencies, and community-based organizations involved in ABE. Of the nearly 300 respondents, more than one-third indicated they employed full-time staff in the administration of the program. Ninety-five percent of the responding agencies accepted volunteers as teachers and 66 percent indicated that teacher training programs, offering a degree in education and coursework in adult education, were desirable (Firoza 1966).

The NCTE study (1965) was far more comprehensive. It examined curriculum in English and reading for the disadvantaged through site visits to 190 programs throughout the United States, including 35 adult basic education programs in 15 states. The problems attributed to adult basic education included the following:

- A lack of operational instructional objectives designed around students' needs and goals
- A marked lack of suitable teaching materials
- Deficiencies in both preservice and inservice education for teachers
- An "air of complacency" that prevailed among administrators, found most often in programs where teachers were teaching both a full day of elementary or secondary school and, as a "sideline," teaching ABE at night. (p. 143)

According to the NCTE, the single greatest problem was providing adequate education for existing teachers and for the multitude to be recruited for the Title IIB programs. The report offered a listing of 12 areas in which teachers by their own admission needed training:

- Psychological and sociological characteristics of adult illiterates
- Adult learning principles as they pertained to this population
- Human relations and group dynamics for the adult basic education classroom
- Methodology for identifying the needs and immediate goals of the learners
- Establishment of attainable and measurable objectives
- Program evaluation
- Selection and evaluation of instructional materials
- Development of supplemental materials
- Testing and its place in adult basic education programs

On the other hand, when asked about the general lack of teacher training, local program administrators explained that--

-- their teachers were already good teachers (implying they did not need additional training);

-- the part-time nature of staffing and staff turnover made training expensive;

-- money was not in their budgets to cover such costs nor was it forthcoming;

-- part-time teachers were already too busy and would not attend; and

-- not enough was known about adult education to make such activities worthwhile.

In spite of these objections, the NCTE recommended institutes of at least 6 weeks duration, preferably 10 or 12 weeks, followed by a series of organized inservice programs.

The initial funding provided by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the predecessor to the Adult Education Act of 1966, set aside 5 percent of each state's grant for state and local teacher training. However, the act neglected to provide the funding necessary to prepare teacher-trainers and other professionals to provide such training at the national, state, and local levels (Radwin 1984). Few individuals were qualified to do so. Neither state nor local education agencies had much to offer in the way of experience or expertise. In 1962, 22 states had no administrators of adult education at all and only 8 had full-time administrators. On the local level, in 1963 adult basic education was offered in slightly more than 1 percent of the nation's school systems (DeSanctis 1979).

Nor could higher education offer much in the way of immediate or direct assistance. Cortright's (1965) survey revealed that only 17 institutions offered coursework in the area of adult literacy. It was an "unusual professor of adult education who had any comprehensive knowledge of the methods and materials appropriate for teaching reading, mathematics or writing or spelling" (Smith 1970, p. 1). Others lamented that the field was faced with the proverbial "chicken-egg" conflict. Do we train first and then implement programs or implement programs and train as we go? (George Washington University 1965). In the meantime, "instant experts--ranging from music majors to high school principals--were made directors of large literacy projects" (Smith 1970, p. 1).

Federal officials worked to generate the necessary resources on two fronts, first developing a cadre of teacher trainers and second, encouraging adult education graduate programs to enter the picture. To begin filling the gap in the shortage of ABE teacher trainers, the Ford Foundation, in cooperation with the U.S. Office of Education (USOE), funded three 2-week workshops held during the summer of 1965 at the Universities of Maryland, New Mexico, and Washington (University of Maryland 1966). It was intended that the participants--155 state directors, university faculty, local program administrators, and teachers--would return to their respective states and train others. Whether the 2-week duration was based on past practice, funding limitations, or an assumption that just 2 weeks of training was sufficient for one to become an effective ABE teacher trainer is unclear. Nevertheless, this mode of providing professional development activities was essentially adopted by the field and contributed, no doubt, to the perception that ABE was to be a part-time effort at all levels.

A follow-up study 1 year later of both participants and those trained by them found 95 percent of the participants were involved in adult basic education, and 70 percent were serving as administrators, supervisors, or teacher trainers in ABE, leading to the conclusion that those who were trained did fulfill "the role foreseen for them at the time of the Summer of 1965 Workshops" (ibid., p. 6).

The survey of individuals trained by the teacher-trainers provided a profile of those involved in ABE during the first 18 months of funding; 78.6 percent were employed in ABE, 25 percent full time and

the balance part time (p. 19). A large majority had experience in elementary education with little or no experience teaching adults; 47 percent reported having a bachelor's degree; 45 percent held a master's degree; and 94 percent held an active teaching certificate or license (p. 20).

The study offered several recommendations for future programming, and one cannot help but be struck by their similarity with those found in more current literature and, to some extent, even the new 1991 National Literacy Act. Among the recommendations drawn from this first effort to provide adult basic education teacher training were the following (University of Maryland 1966, pp. 32-39):

- Meaningful, productive teacher-training programs with adequate funding should be made available immediately . . . where possible, they should be full-time programs for full-time teachers.

- The most significant learning experiences have taken place when the trainee is fully involved as a participant in the training program.

- Just as the teacher-trainee should be allowed to participate fully in his/her own learning process, so should the adult basic education student be allowed to participate in his/her own study plan.

- There are . . . implications that the recruitment programs are not reaching the "hard core" adult undereducated. Those who come . . . seem to be already highly motivated.

- The involvement of the industrial community in training of the adult undereducated will attain increasing significance as the labor market for skilled personnel becomes tighter in the years to come. . . . Demonstration projects . . . are needed in industrial concerns to determine the efficacy of internal education programs [and] . . . to demonstrate that this training can be effective.

- Regional demonstration centers are needed to perform staff and teacher-training . . . research on materials, methods . . . evaluation of programs . . . use of technological innovations; development of new curricula and other important areas of ABE.

- Establish a National Teacher-Training Institute . . . staffed by full-time professionals using modern materials, methods, and technologies.

On the second front, USOE funded a workshop for adult education graduate faculty aimed at accelerating the preparation of adult educators. Working papers around which discussion focused were prepared by George F. Aker, Alexander Charters, and Howard McClusky (George Washington University 1965). Aker projected the number of new ABE staff to be trained could range from 20,000 to 100,000 and spoke of the need to identify and rapidly disseminate resources and relevant information and to encourage innovation and develop evaluation studies "to help eliminate ineffective practices and identify effective ones" (p. 6). He cautioned that a major challenge would be to surmount the drawbacks frequently inherent to "crash" programs that are "manifested by poor coordination, inefficient operation, internal conflict, and external skepticism and criticism" (p. 6).

Discussing the rapid growth in adult education at the college and university level, Charters reported that participation had increased from approximately 1.7 million to over 2.5 million in just 4 years.

Comparing the need to available human resources--just 456 persons would hold a doctorate in adult education by June 1965--adult education graduate programs could not begin to meet the needs in cooperative and higher education alone. Addressing the issue of professional standards, Charters suggested that an attempt "be made to set up professional standards for adult education" (p. 25).

McClusky noted that the programs being implemented as a result of the new legislation presented demands far beyond the present performance level of existing agencies, causing "a crisis in program and personnel" (p. 27). McClusky asked the "eighteen karat" question: "Can a field already marginal, and a field whose professional ranks are still thin, take on an additional job which is even more marginal than the one to which it is already committed?" (p. 33).

THE FORMATIVE YEARS: 1966-72

Following a 1965 amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act, which provided funds for national teacher training activities, a contract was awarded to the National University Extension Association (NUEA). Nine regional institutes were conducted by NUEA during the summer of 1966 and were continued under Section 309 of the Adult Education Act of 1966. The 1966 legislation added yet another much needed element to the efforts to develop resources for the field. It set aside 10-20 percent of ABE annual appropriations for discretionary grants for teacher training (Sec. 309c) and for special project grants intended to promote innovative programs and practices (Sec. 309b). As a result, the development of ABE resources became a two-pronged effort. On the one hand, training would continue and expand considerably while at the same time new efforts would be funded that would involve the use of innovative methods, systems, and programs of national significance, both under direction of the U.S. Office of Education.

Training ABE Staff

In the summer of 1967, 19 institutions provided training for 1,197 participants and, in the summer of 1968, institutes were expected to serve 2,000 teachers and administrators (National Advisory Committee on Adult Basic Education 1968). Some institutes were designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of those thrust into new leadership roles (NUEA 1967; Pumerantz 1969) whereas others were designed to encourage individuals and institutions to take on such roles (University of Chicago 1970; University of Utah 1971). A preinstitute seminar in May 1967 provided state directors a comprehensive overview of the 20 institutes planned for the coming summer. Among the topics presented were (1) programmed instruction and learning (including a discussion of teacher attitudes toward both); (2) a learner-centered instructional systems approach as used at Michigan's Oakland Community College; (3) the Educational Development Laboratories Learning System as put into practice at Wayne State University's Adult Basic Education Institute; (4) the use of videotapes and computers; and (5) an introduction to the new Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Some sessions were designed to "model" individualized instruction for the state directors, basing small group activities upon their current level of knowledge about the topic; others included onsite ABE program visits or discussions with ABE classroom teachers (NUEA 1967).

Pagano, director of the Division of Adult Education in USOE until 1968, offered encouragement to the state directors and university faculty present and predicted that--

> You are about to make this activity gain new recognition on campuses around the country. In higher education, the adult educator becomes the problem solver through the process of bringing people into society and enabling them to work together. . . . You will establish in the public school system of America a

> new role and a new status for the adult educator, the administrator, the teacher, and for the community developer and counselor. (NUEA 1967, p. 63)

Pitchell, executive director of NUEA, reminded those present that all the effective planning at the federal, state and local levels will have failed if teachers are not adequately prepared for their jobs.

Institutes of this period generally served two purposes. They provided training and they resulted in products: training guides, curriculum guides, and guides for the evaluation of instructional materials, guides for the teaching of reading, math, and English as a second language. One such publication, ***Adult Basic Education: A Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers***, was developed by the National Association for Public and Continuing Education (NAPSAE 1966), a key player during the early years. The guide was based on the material gathered for and the experience gained from the initial three workshops and was subsequently used as a basic text for the nine NUEA workshops the during the summer of 1966.

Assessment of Early Training Efforts

Reviews of the early efforts were mixed. Participants were most often a collection of state directors, local program administrators, and teachers, the latter two selected by state directors, a process that often resulted in the same person attending several institutes. Pretesting to assess participants' readiness for the content to be covered or posttesting to determine knowledge gained were not used and few institutes conducted follow-up of any kind. Although content was rarely identified through needs assessments, attempts were made to identify what ABE teachers should know, what strategies they should be able to implement, and what behaviors and attitudes were critical to a successful instructional program.

However, for the most part, curricula were created from the experiences of ABE teacher-trainers, program administrators, and classroom teachers (Regan and Walsh 1971). Regan and Walsh noted that the most innovative institutes appeared to be those funded directly by USOE. They covered ABE curriculum comprehensively, giving attention to the teaching of reading, math, and communications, as well as life skills such as parenting, the use of community resources, civic responsibility, health and safety, and consumer skills. A majority offered information relating to the psychological and sociological characteristics of the disadvantaged adult, (Florida State University 1968; North Carolina State University 1966) and some approached problems that might arise due to the conflicting cultures, value systems, life-styles, and communication patterns of ABE students and the predominantly white, middle-class teachers (Carter and Short 1967). Others focused on the roles of counselors (Rose 1970) and administrators (Pumerantz 1969) and still others on training teacher aides (Edwards and Cohen 1967; University of Tulsa 1970). The University of Maryland provided training in the use of instructional television and produced an ABE teacher training program on video (Buskey 1971); the University of Hawaii developed a model of ABE in corrections and provided specialized training for selected leaders in correctional education (Ryan and Silvern 1970).

As the years progressed, USOE-funded institutes were also becoming more innovative in the methods and techniques used to deliver the content. The earlier institutes (1964-66) relied heavily on lecture, small group, discussion, work groups and

case studies (Luke and Pitchell 1968). By 1967 the institutes began using demonstration and modeling, role playing, field visits, individual study, micro teaching, and videotaping for replay, feedback, and evaluation. A 1970 institute gave participants a live-in opportunity, arranging for them to spend 4 nights in the homes of disadvantaged families (Stevenson 1970), and another provided a student teaching experience and field work for those being trained as teachers of undereducated blind and visually limited adults (Parker 1970).

Evaluation most often relied upon level of satisfaction of participants with the activity or upon the ability of the institute to generate a product, generally a teacher's guide focusing on some aspect of instruction. However, institute reports published after 1967 reveal that evaluation was also changing. Some included follow-up assistance (University of Utah 1971); others introduced pre- and posttesting (Ryan and Silvern 1970; University of Texas 1970). Institutes 3 to 4 weeks in duration occasionally included intermittent evaluations to provide feedback that might signal a need to adjust the program (Seaman, Martin, and Phillips 1970).

However, between 1967 and 1971 a number of reports appeared that were critical of ABE teacher training efforts or that cited the inadequacy of such programs to meet the need. Griffith and Hayes (1970) cited a 1967 study by Xerox Corporation that called for a continuing effort on the part of the federal government to professionalize the field of adult basic education and for certification standards to be set by state education agencies. At the time the study was undertaken there were just over 1,500 local ABE programs in the United States. Ninety-three percent of the 304 teachers interviewed were college graduates but few had any formal training in ABE.

In their 1968 report to the President's National Advisory Committee, Greenleigh Associates noted that local programs remained confused and frustrated and recommended an increase in funds for teacher training. The Second National Leadership Conference, which involved state directors, project directors, and others in a review of issues and concerns, concluded that a primary handicap was a lack of trained teachers, curriculum materials, evaluation, and reevaluation as well as a lack of funding and sufficient staffing to maintain adequate communication at all levels (Aker 1968).

Johnson, Cortright, and Laubach (1968, 1969) reported that content proved in large part to be irrelevant and even incompatible with what teachers learned themselves from their contact with adult students and that short-term workshops did not produce long-term change. According to Regan and Walsh (1971), little effort had been made by institute and workshop planners to use what was already known about staff training, resulting in the "proliferation of a series of similarly unsophisticated ABE training programs which had the effect of retarding the acceptance of ABE as a profession" (p. 65). State directors heavily criticized the summer institutes because they were "seemingly not meeting the training needs with the speed and impact necessary to alleviate the problem" (Bosco 1975, p. viii).

Finally, Spear et al. (1973) reported that the most singular discovery that emerged from nearly 18 months of study devoted to adult basic education teacher training was how little was known about it:

> Its literature is scattered; its records imprecise or missing altogether; its costs uncalculated; its students and teachers uncounted and unknown; its objectives

> obscure; and its organization adrift. (p. 1)

In a 4-year period (1964-68) spanning both the Economic Opportunity Act and the first 2 years of the 1966 Adult Education Act, 4,300 teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, and counselors participated in short-term summer institutes and weekend workshops. By that time, ABE programs were serving over 455,000 students (Radwin 1984). Keeping in mind that subject, substance, and target group varied from institute to institute and that a large majority of those trained were employed part time in ABE, whereas still others left the field before the investment paid off--by 1968, at the most, one ABE staff person was "trained" for every 100 ABE learners enrolled.

In spite of the criticism of teacher training efforts to date and the part-time nature of both ABE staff and students, surprising statistics provided by state departments of education led the National Advisory Committee on Adult Education to report in 1969 that ABE "lowers unemployment, decreases welfare rolls and increases national production." The report noted that 87,000 found jobs, received raises, or were promoted; 48,000 entered job training programs; 8,000 left the welfare rolls; 62,000 learned to read and write for the first time; and 28,000 registered to vote (National Advisory Committee on Adult Education 1969, p. 2).

In addition to the already mentioned shortcomings, summer institutes were expensive. In 1970 nearly $2 million supported 20 institutes, training 1,700 staff, and in 1971 an additional $3.3 million was awarded for 35 institutes that provided training to 2,600 staff, a cost of over $1,200 per participant. Enrollments in the meantime climbed to 627,340 (National Advisory Council on Adult Education 1972).

Special Demonstration Projects

The Adult Education Act of 1966, Section 309c, also provided for two types of special demonstration and development projects. The first involved "the use of innovative methods, systems, materials or programs" that "may have national significance or be of a special value in promoting effective programs" (Adult Education Act 1966, Sec. 309b, para. 1). The second was to "involve programs of adult education . . . which have unusual promise in promoting a comprehensive approach to the problems" (para. 2) of the target population.

In 1967, $1.5 million was allocated for 10 experimental and demonstration projects. Funding was increased to $6.5 million in 1968 to allow for continuation and expansion of most of the previously funded projects and to expand new efforts in scope and number. In New York, an ABE program was conducted for 1,500 parents of children enrolled in Head Start, half of whom were Spanish speaking (NACABE 1968). The Detroit Public Schools in cooperation with Wayne State University and the Michigan State Department of Education set up the Urban Adult Education Institute, the objective of which was to demonstrate and test new approaches in computer-assisted instruction, programmed learning, and tutorial team-teaching (ibid.). Opportunities Industrialization Center of Philadelphia received funds for the Adult Armchair Education Project, in which learning activities took place in the homes of neighborhood volunteers. Students were recruited by indigenous recruiters who made personal appeals to undereducated adults. As participants became comfortable with the program, they were encouraged to enroll in regular ABE classes. Teachers for the program were volunteers from the local school district, retirees, and neighborhood people (General Electric Company 1969).

Special populations and innovative delivery systems were addressed by the California and Arizona State Departments of Education and the University of Colorado in a joint project using educational television to deliver a prototype instructional package to undereducated and illiterate Spanish-speaking adults (Southwestern Cooperative Educational Laboratory 1967). In a project designed to serve the rural populations of eight states in the Appalachia region, Morehead University experimented with computer-assisted instruction, programmed learning, and various recruitment strategies and provided training to teachers throughout the region (General Electric Company 1969). This project, later known as the Appalachian Adult Education Center, served as many as 13 states and became one of the hallmarks of the 309b grants program (Radwin 1984).

Assessment of Special Demonstration Projects

General Electric (1969) examined special demonstration projects and concluded that useful results were evolving from the special projects. Indications were that the projects could be more successful and the outcomes improved if solid, better guidelines were established, if assistance and advice were available, especially in the early stages, and if consultation were provided for directors who had not had previous experience with such projects. The report also suggested more careful monitoring, training in report writing, and guidelines for dissemination and replication. It recommended that the advantages of implementing the innovations in ongoing programs across the country should be tested and demonstrated.

Higher Education Efforts

In the meantime, adult education professors continued to expand their ability to serve this growing field. Among the 32 teacher training projects funded in 1968 was a conference sponsored by the University of Chicago. It brought together 82 participants, including professors of adult education, professor-administrators, governmental personnel, and others involved in ABE. The conference report noted that research papers were prepared by 22 resource personnel. (These papers were subsequently published under the title *Adult Basic Education: The State of the Art*, Griffith and Hayes 1970.) Only one lecture was delivered throughout the course of the meeting. Instead, professors engaged in small group activities, field visits--including "a controversial walking tour of the ghetto" led by "gang members"--(University of Chicago 1970, p. 61), and demonstration sessions that placed emphasis on participant interaction. A follow-up evaluation conducted 6 months after the conference revealed that 62 percent were able to use information provided in "justifying to their institutions the need for developing or expanding an ABE teacher training program" (ibid., p. 2). Of the professors, the primary target audience, 56 percent expanded their ABE teacher training activities and 87 percent had planned and implemented new efforts (p. 3).

A different approach was taken through a project undertaken by the University of Utah in 1970-71 that involved university and college administrators, deans, and department chairs from institutions throughout the West in a effort to provide them with the knowledge and skills necessary to organize and conduct programs for training ABE teachers and to provide follow-up consulting and other assistance to those involved. The institute funded 25 participants from 26 institutions and an

additional 7 attended who came at their institution's expense. Follow-up studies revealed that, as a result of this effort, (1) new courses relevant to ABE were added at 7 institutions; (2) 23 were conducting follow-up activities; (3) over 600 persons had attended meetings and workshops; (4) 5 new graduate programs in adult education were implemented; and (5) 17 participating institutions indicated they had established very close to excellent relationships with their adult education state director. In addition, the Regional Association for Adult and Continuing Education was established, which included eight of the original participating institutions and corresponding state departments of education from Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and Arkansas, and a consortium arrangement among four institutions was initiated in Montana (University of Utah 1971, pp. 10-11).

Assessment of Higher Education Efforts

However, higher education's support of ABE still had a long way to go. In spite of efforts to encourage its involvement, a survey of adult education graduate programs in 1970-71 revealed that 61 institutions offered degree programs in adult education. Adult basic education was the first or second area of emphasis in just 14 of the 61 programs identified whereas an additional 12 ranked it third to fifth. Eighteen states and three territories were still without such programs (Griffith and Cloutier 1974).

Special demonstration project funding continued to shape the field well into the early 1970s. The University of Texas at Austin (1970), which served the states in Region VI, developed an instructional program in guidance and counseling for ABE and provided training throughout the region. Columbia University (1971) studied selected innovative practices in a variety of urban ABE programs including the use of paid and volunteer paraprofessionals and the design and management of learning centers/laboratories as well as the co-sponsorship of ABE classes with employers and other organizations. In an effort to assist rural communities, Project COMMUNI-LINK was undertaken at Colorado State University (1971) to foster interagency cooperation and communication through the training of teams of professional, paraprofessionals, and volunteer community workers from 18 communities in 9 states in the process of community-wide program development.

THE REGIONAL APPROACH

Teacher training projects funded in the Southeast often included region-wide participation. To encourage such efforts, the states of Region IV were funded by USOE in 1969 to develop a regional approach to adult education staff development. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) served as the coordinating agent. In just its first year of operation, 16 institutions of higher education participated, 13 of which established adult education divisions. Twenty-nine full-time faculty were hired, nearly 3,000 students enrolled in credit courses, and almost 5,000 teachers and supervisors were trained in workshops and seminars (SREB 1970). Based upon the success of that effort, USOE changed its funding pattern and called for the development of comparable projects in each of the nine other USOE regions; regionalization was to become the "new concept" (Bosco 1975, p. viii) in adult education staff development. Over a 3-year period (1972-74), $7.5 million was allocated to establish 10 regional Adult Education Staff Development Projects (DeSanctis 1976).

Adult Education Staff Development Projects

USOE's intent was to establish in each state within each of the 10 USOE regions a system of staff development and teacher training that would survive beyond the designated 3-year period without further assistance from 309(c) funds. Guidelines established by USOE called for the regional projects to develop the capability in each state to formulate short-range goals and a required long-range plan for staff development linking state departments, institutions of higher education, and school districts and to deliver those services (Worthington 1971). Among the tasks outlined, each regional project during the planning phase was to survey systematically the "adult education manpower needs in the Region," which could include--

> an analysis of career patterns and opportunities for selected categories of adult educators within the Region together with identification of criteria for success as teachers or administrators. (Worthington 1971, p. 2)

In addition to responding to the guidelines, many regions developed a unique focus. Region VIII focused on development of a multifaceted individualized training program (ITP) for ABE staff (Kreitlow and Kreitlow 1975); Region III attempted to establish a system of ongoing needs assessment and focused on the definition of roles and responsibilities and the competencies necessary to carry out those responsibilities. Region III gave particular attention to a new role--staff development specialist--one of which was assigned in each state in the region (Ulin 1976; University of Maryland 1973). Region IV worked to expand and strengthen the systems already in place by focusing on dissemination (SREB 1974). As one component of its project, Region I developed and field tested a series of five self-contained instructional modules for ABE staff that could be offered to individuals

or to small or large groups (University of Massachusetts 1973).

To assist the regions in their individual efforts, USOE funded the Center for Resource Development in Adult Education at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. The center lent support, conducted research, and provided opportunities for regional directors to meet, discuss, and share progress and problems. Through various means, it kept them aware of what was going on in other 309(b) demonstration projects and 309(c) training projects and generally fostered communication between and among the regional projects and the participating states.

Federal Influence during the 1970s

During the years of the regional projects, USOE continued its influence, funding special demonstration and staff development projects through discretionary funds set aside for its use. Among the most notable research projects funded during the early 1970s were an extensive longitudinal evaluation of ABE (Kent 1973), the first of its kind since the Adult Education Act of 1966, and the Florida State Monograph Series in 1971. Grants to the Center for Adult Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, produced a study by Mezirow and Irish (1974), which examined in depth the priorities of ABE local program administrators, teachers, state directors, and others in an effort to provide direction for future special demonstration projects that could address several needs at the same time.

Federally sponsored funding also continued to make major contributions to the development of the literature and research base. Projects of that period produced the following:

- ***An Evaluation Guide for Adult Basic Education Programs*** (Knox, Mezirow, Darkenwald, and Beder 1972)
- ***The Last Gamble on Education*** (Mezirow, Darkenwald, and Knox 1975), still considered to be a landmark by many
- Darkenwald's 1974 study of the effects of a teacher's racial/cultural background on dropout rates and attendance in ABE
- Adkins' ***Life Skills Series*** (1977), which is still in use in 1991

Attention to student-centered curriculum essentially got its start with a project awarded to World Education, which was invited to develop learner-centered materials resulting in AIM, apperception-interactive method (Brehmer 1977). The Maryland State Department of Education was awarded a grant to evaluate and disseminate nationally ***Basic Education: Teaching the Adult***, a series of instructional videotapes for ABE teachers that had been developed through previous grants (Gruetter 1975). Moving west, the University of Missouri-Kansas City (Spear et al. 1972a,b,c; 1973) conducted a four-part study of adult basic education national teacher training including a review of the literature, a report on the state of the art, a survey of teacher training needs, and a final report to include recommendations for future teacher training program development.

The Adult Performance Level Study

In the early 1970s, USOE set the stage for a four-year study that was to change the shape and substance of ABE. Up to this time, instructional objectives focused on teaching reading, computation (math), and English, but even the early teacher training institutes suggested that teachers also

address such areas as health and nutrition, citizenship and consumer skills, budgeting, and the like. However, although adult basic educators talked a good bit about teaching coping or life skills, such topics seldom found their way into the classroom (Mezirow et al. 1975). In 1971 USOE awarded a special demonstration project grant to the Texas Education Agency to conduct a study of adult literacy. In 1972 the funds were awarded directly to the University of Texas at Austin, which had served as a subcontractor during the first year (Parker and Taylor 1980). This controversial study, the Adult Performance Level (APL) Project (1975), defined some 65 objectives, or life tasks, keyed to five general knowledge areas--consumer economics, health, community resources, occupational knowledge, and government and law. APL described three levels of functional competency within each area, associated with success as measured by education, job status, and income; and a national assessment was conducted to determine the APL skill level of the adult population (Parker and Taylor 1980).

> The results were devastating and commanded national attention by the media: approximately 20 percent of the total adult population . . . possess less than minimal survival skills and another 33 percent have less than proficient survival skills. (Parker and Taylor 1980, p. 10)

Successes and Failures of the AESD Projects

In the meantime, a number of regional projects experienced problems. In Region II, although the states involved had mutually predetermined that the region would focus on competency-based teacher education (CBTE), the states and individuals involved also needed a continuous flow of information about what was happening across the country. The demand on the Region II staff to provide both hampered their ability to accomplish their primary goal (DeSanctis 1976).

In regard to the Region III AESD project, Ulin (1976) noted that at the end of the first year, the project was not bringing its varied resources into play or reaching project goals. A closer look indicated that the issue was not lack of individual skills, but rather an inability to use those skills effectively among state departments of education, higher education institutions, and local education agencies within the regional setting. The reasons for gradual abandonment of a system designed to provide a continuously updated survey of learning needs and resources suggested that these activities conflicted with institutional traditions or structures. Ulin observed that the adult education staff development project was suspect. It was generally viewed as a convenient mechanism to fund the establishment of university-based adult education programs that, in addition to providing a cadre of trained individuals, would serve as a force for the formulation of a licensing or professional certification process for employment in public school adult education.

Region VIII's Project ACT attempted to develop a multipronged program under the leadership of a policy board made up of participating state directors, which proved to be the most inflexible component of the program. The board lacked unity of purpose; three of six members were not convinced that a regional effort was even needed. The members' priorities were such that the ACT project was low on its list, and aspects of the project could not be put into place because the states would not allocate the necessary matching funds (Kreitlow and Kreitlow 1975).

On the other hand, the project was far more successful than the policy board thought. The Individualized Training Program (ITP) was demonstrated to be an effective multidimensional training system and was adapted for use in Pennsylvania (Leahy 1978). The evaluation found that the closer an individual was to the project the more positive was that individual's response. Those who received direct benefits--participating ABE teachers, counselors, and administrators--gave the project its highest ratings. The report suggested that an inservice program for policy board members/state directors would have built unity, understanding of the concept, and a base for positive action (Kreitlow and Kreitlow 1975).

In spite of the fact that the Region IV AESD project was in its fifth year and had experienced a great deal of success, there were still some basic issues to be resolved. As part of its planning for the intended dissemination system, a survey was conducted among the principal players to determine which resource or role was performing what activity (Scott 1973). The results of the survey, presented at its 1973 annual meeting, revealed that state directors felt that it was their role to determine training and information needs and establish priorities. All others, including state staff development specialists, members of the state staff development planning committees, university faculty, project graduate students, and local trainers, felt the same way. Avoiding the issue of the perceived power of the state directors, an observer from a neighboring region noted that the group diplomatically conceded--

> it was both impractical and improbable to assume that the state directors can or must make all decisions concerning needs and priorities of the project because it is unlikely that one individual with vast responsibilities could remain aware of and alert to the training and information needs of particular programs and individuals throughout the state. (Scott 1973)

The Region X effort benefitted from the fact that the concept of regionalism was already under discussion and received a good deal of attention prior to the start of the regional projects. The head start gave these states the opportunity to see their similarities rather than their differences. Feeling far from the center of federal decision making and lacking the funds to accomplish as separate entities all of the tasks required, the states had already banded together to seek ways to maximize the use of available resources, both fiscal and human (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory 1975).

State directors served as policy makers and decision makers. Staff development coordinators taught university courses, while providing assistance to local programs. Teacher trainers served as local program directors or classroom teachers in addition to their activities related to staff development. This level of direct, ongoing participation and involvement at the local level may have been a factor that led to the continuation of the program. Local programs saw leadership emanating from the state agencies rather than the regional program, a healthy indicator that the original intention of the regional projects--the institutionalization of staff development within each agency in each state--was being achieved in the Northwest (ibid).

In 1974 USOE asked the Center for Resource Development to "manage an assessment of the national staff development effort" (Bosco 1975, p. v). Meanwhile, a decision was pending to end support of Section 309(b) and (c) funds by the Division of Adult Education, USOE.

In his assessment of the adult education staff development regional projects, Bosco (1975) reported that in most cases, conflicts between the values and needs held by one state within a region, and the difficulties inherent in attempting to balance those values and needs against those of a neighboring state, posed serious difficulties for the regional projects, particularly when both were competing for limited attention and funds. At one level states were alike yet at another they were different. In most cases the differences prevailed. Although the states shared a common goal of providing high quality adult basic education, states within each region invariably chose different routes to achieve that goal, based on each state's values and perception of its own unique resources (or lack of resources) to meet the needs of ABE programs and program staff. States operating within the regional concept had difficulty recognizing that they could remain independent and at the same time achieve a level of interdependence. Interdependence required an acknowledgment of individual and collective weaknesses as well as strengths. Instead, almost all maintained a level of mistrust and questioned the "motives, desires and roles played by participants from other agencies" (Bosco 1975, p. 21). In fact, state directors were in basic agreement that nearly half of their time communicating was spent on "disputes, requiring only a clearing up of understanding" (p. 13).

On the positive side, the states reported a greater awareness of adult basic education and the needs and problems related to staff development and teacher training at the state, university, and local levels and an increase in teacher training activity. Although 60 percent indicated an interest in continuing the regional effort, they also indicated "that resources, particularly money, would be difficult if not impossible to commit to a regional effort" (Bosco 1975, p. 21). Participants indicated that in some cases their respective priorities were not high enough in the region to receive adequate attention and that the geographic distribution put states together whose "needs were so diverse and organizational patterns so different" (p. 22) that the concept of regionalization could not succeed. They indicated that a critical goal, needs assessment, was not accomplished until too late. Early efforts were conducted by committee, a process that could not possibly generate the objective data that can result from empirical studies.

On the other hand, Bosco noted that the turnover rate of ABE staff was "so high" that in many cases resources were "wasted . . . . One cannot develop a staff that one is constantly replacing" (p. 23). In the end, Bosco indicated that in spite of the apparent problems the funding should have continued. He noted that most "innovations take three to five years to mature into . . . effectiveness" and that in the case of the regional projects the "life blood was cut off before the critical mass was achieved" (p. 26).

However one might view the regional projects, they drew attention to staff development as a process and in many ways moved the field ahead professionally. State departments of education, higher education, and local programs around the country developed new partnerships, however tentative, and participation in adult education staff development was high. The projects reached at least 10 times as many ABE professionals as had been trained through the summer institutes (Radwin 1984). They made major contributions to the development of adult education graduate programs, which by the late 1970s had increased to well over 100 nationally (Parker 1979), as many adult basic educators sought degrees in the field. For the time being anyway, many saw their professional horizons expand.

However, the regional projects probably had their greatest impact on the professionalization of adult educators through their participation and involvement in the projects than through any particular training activity (Parker 1979). They brought excitement and momentum to the field. There was a new sense of professional growth, camaraderie, and purpose to match the dedication and commitment many had for their students.

Competency-Based Adult Education: The Issue of the 1970s

Two additional activities sparked debate and discussion throughout the field during the decade of the 1970s and contributed to the momentum generated by the regional projects: the APL study and efforts to identify competencies essential to the field of adult education in general and, more specifically, to adult basic education. Both signaled a move toward competency-based adult education--as applied to the learner on the one hand and to the professional on the other.

The APL study met with criticism from several fronts. Some questioned the methodology as biased, pointing out that functional literacy skills had been defined in terms of white, middle-class values (Griffith and Cervero 1977). Some feared that APL was the forerunner of a federally developed curriculum for ABE and others that it would replace the General Educational Development (GED) Program (Parker and Taylor 1980).

Parker and Taylor noted that, in addition to the ***Life Skills Series*** developed by Adkins (1977) and the New York State External High School Diploma Program (Nickse 1980), the APL research contributed to the development of competency-based adult education (CBAE) and to the development of programs for its implementation. In their Delphi survey, which examined CBAE in depth, Parker and Taylor found that although the APL objectives were controversial, they were being used as the basis for incorporating CBAE in adult basic education programs across the country. Their study also revealed that staff training was a significant factor in the development and implementation of CBAE.

In fact APL and CBAE "hit the streets running." In spite of the debates surrounding the APL methodology and the concurrent move toward competency-based adult education, of the 690 projects funded in 1978, one-third were directly related to some aspect of APL or CBAE, including 40 of the approximately 125 staff development projects (Clearinghouse ADELL 1978). Mezirow et al. (1975) observed that teachers of adults who emphasized nontraditional subjects (such as those addressed in CBAE and APL curricula) had fewer dropouts and higher attendance figures than teachers who emphasized traditional content.

On another front the APL project, with support from the Texas Education Agency, had designed and pilot tested the APL Diploma Program, a competency-based program that would grant a high school diploma to "adults who could demonstrate their ability to adequately perform tasks required of them in their everyday lives" (Shelton 1980, p. 62). The program was disseminated through the National Diffusion Network and by 1980 was adopted at over 50 sites, with at least one site in every region.

A second area that attracted researchers was the identification and specification of the specialized knowledge and skills necessary to be an effective adult basic education administrator or teacher. Charters (George Washington University 1965) proposed that an effort be made to develop

adult education professional standards. Shortly after, Griffith and Hayes (1970) suggested that if efficient training programs are to be developed then the competencies required of individuals holding various position in ABE must be specified. Bosco (1975) noted the ineffectiveness of assessing training needs "by committee" and recommended that a research-based system of staff competencies be developed that could serve as the basis for yearly needs assessments. In a review of models and innovative programs for ABE teacher training, Grabowski (1976) found that each training program planning model he examined called for the identification of competencies--what competencies teachers ought to have, what competencies they already possess, and what competencies they should acquire.

One such study by Mocker (1974a) received wide attention. It was the first effort to identify, classify, and rank competencies for ABE teachers on a national scale. Mocker's study included the use of two expert panels in the validation process and a national sample of ABE practitioners--local ABE program directors and teachers--in the rating process. Subsequently published and disseminated by the Center for Resource Development in Adult Education (Mocker 1974b), Mocker's ABE teacher competency inventory was used in the needs assessment phase of staff development in six states (Mocker and Zinn, 1975; Peebles 1975; Zinn 1974a,b and 1975). The items were later revised to include teacher competencies necessary to implement the Adult Performance Level curriculum (Mocker and Spear 1976).

Other studies, although not national in scope, were conducted by Bunning (1976), Burrichter and Gardner (1978), Fellenz (1981), Fenn (1972), Grabowski (1976), Griffith and Marcus (1978), Karlovic (1985), McClellan (1975), Rossman and Powers (1981), Smith (1976), State University of New York-Albany (1977), and Veri (1972).

The intensity with which the field of adult education was moving toward competency-based education concerned many in the field. Ohliger (1981) and Rockhill (1983), outspoken critics of mandatory adult continuing education, adult education staff development, and certification programs, cautioned that adult learners were voluntary. By embracing competency-based education and what appeared to be its cohorts--mandatory continuing education and certification--adult education was in danger of losing its greatest asset--the voluntary learner. According to those who found fault with the movement, not only were a large number of adult students becoming externally directed by bureaucratic requirements, but so were adult educators.

Philosophy and Assumptions of Staff Development

Before leaving this period in the history of ABE, there is more to consider beyond the obvious outcomes, successes, and failures attached to the regional efforts. The regional projects focused not just on the "activity" of staff development and teacher training but also on the processes involved. This was a period during which philosophy and assumptions were formulated and debated. In anticipation of increased attention to staff development and research as a result of the National Literacy Act of 1991, it might prove helpful to highlight some of the relevant literature that emerged as a result of the regional projects. The 1991 legislation, among other things, mandates increased spending for staff development and teacher training (at least 10 percent of the state grant). In addition, it establishes a National Institute for Literacy and provides funding for

State/Regional Literacy Resource Centers (Rose 1992).

Philosophy

Ulin (1976), director of the Region III adult education staff development project, suggested that staff development differs from other forms of teacher training. The word "staff" by definition implies a linkage between changes in learners' behavior and changes in the organizations of which they are a part. The primary purpose of a staff development program is to improve the ability of both staff members and the organizations involved to respond to the changing demands of their shared work environment. Teacher training, on the other hand, focuses on the individual, provides learning experiences based on curricular content and skill needs, and is in line with the personal and professional goals of the individual.

According to Ulin, there is an evolutionary process to staff development that requires new skills and new relationships. Staff development provides learning activities that derive from the interrelationships between individuals' needs and expectations and those of the organizations of which they are a part. The resulting new behaviors affect the structure, the policies, and the climate of the organization. The organization's response, in turn, affects the behavior of the staff. In response to other pressures such as the need to increase productivity or use financial, physical, and human resources more effectively, organizations change their structure and policies. These changes also have an impact upon the behavior and attitude of the staff and how they respond to these pressures determines the effectiveness of organizations (Ulin 1976).

There is little in the literature to imply that these distinctions are generally understood or applied in practice. For example, changes in priorities (a new target population) and programming (adult performance level) are mandated through amendments to the legislation and adjustments to the funding patterns (new funding categories, more or less money). They in turn are implemented (or ignored) at the state and local levels with minimal attention given to their impact on either the agencies and organizations involved or the personnel charged with their implementation.

Hirschowitz (1975) viewed adult education staff development as a change process. He suggested that the program should enhance knowledge and strengthen problem-solving skills of participants by encouraging the pooling and sharing of knowledge, linking staff members with particular needs to those who have the experience and knowledge to meet those needs. The refinement of knowledge and skills should serve to move adult education toward more precise operations and increased productivity.

Like Ulin, Hirschowitz went beyond "training," urging that the scope of the staff development program should be wideranging and explore prevailing attitudes, opinions, and beliefs about ends, means, and missions; assumptions about human motivations in the system; the structure of the organization, operations, and practices; and administrative and leadership styles. He noted that participants should be involved in the planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation and that together state departments of education, higher education, and local programs should arrive at agreed-upon priorities for a local, state, or regional staff development program.

Hirschowitz cautioned that staff development should not be conceived as something separate from, or parallel to, the

simultaneous development of program operations. It should be an organic, continuous process, intimately related to the change process, provide a problem-solving arena, and serve as a change agent. It is imperative that--

> the formal leaders understand and endorse that time used for purposes of collaborative learning, planning, cross fertilizing consultation, mutual support, and staff development is not an organizational luxury or privilege--it is an organizational necessity. (p. 213)

Assumptions

Hartwig (1977), consultant to Iowa's staff development effort, viewed staff development as a linkage process and offered the following propositions:

1. To be truly helpful and useful, trainers must be able to simulate the staff's problem-solving process.

2. To derive help from trainers (resource systems) the staff must be able to simulate resource system processes, that is, to appreciate research knowledge and understand how research knowledge is generated and validated.

3. Effective utilization requires reciprocal feedback.

4. Trainers need to develop reciprocal and corroborative relationships not only with a variety of potential programs but also with a large diverse group of other resource systems.

5. Staffs need to develop reciprocal and corroborative relationships with a variety of resource persons (trainers).

6. Both trainers and staff need a willingness to listen to new ideas (openness) as an important prerequisite to change.

7. Effective knowledge is a self-fulfilling prophecy: the staff's expectation that effort (in retrieval and application) will pay off is a good indicator that it will.

8. A willingness to take risks is an important requirement for successful innovation.

9. A willingness to make an effort to adapt innovation to one's own situation is an important prerequisite to effective utilization (a dimension of openness).

10. Those who already possess the most in the way of resources and capabilities are the most likely to get even more.

11. Anticipated profit (reward) is a major incentive for diffusers and users of innovation.

12. Rewarding encounters with new knowledge lead to expectations that future encounters will also be rewarding.

13. New ideas and innovations that clearly contradict existing values will not get as far in a staff person's system as those that appeal to cherished values.

DeSanctis (1976), director of the Region II Adult Education Staff Development Project, proposed that teacher training, a primary function of staff development, be viewed from the perspective of six underlying assumptions about the learner and the teacher, which serve to define the problems as well as provide a focus for

what otherwise are "scattered and episodic" events. He suggested that those responsible for staff development consider the following assumptions:

1. Some adults have needs that have to be identified, categorized, and integrated into an ABE instructional program. Furthermore, these adults possess knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors as well as other physical, psychological, cultural, and social characteristics that must be understood in order for these needs to be met adequately.

2. These adults participate in formal learning environments because they feel that their needs can be met, at least in part, through such environments.

3. Within these learning environments there are teachers (or some euphemistic equivalents) who possess or should possess specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors that will assist adult learners in meeting their needs.

4. There is a relationship between specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors of the teacher and movement toward the learning goals of the adult student.

5. The knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for effective teaching can be, at least in part, obtained through preservice and/or inservice training.

STATE AND NATIONAL EFFORTS: 1976 TO THE PRESENT

USOE, under continued pressure from state directors who had "actively sought its demise" (Radwin 1984, p. 31), carried out its original plan to discontinue funding of the regional projects. Meanwhile, new legislation transferred staff development responsibilities and monies over to the individual states. Fifteen percent (later reduced to 10 percent) of the total allocation to each state was to be set aside for ABE staff development and teacher training as well as special experimental demonstration projects.

In the opinion of many, the change brought about a decrease in the effectiveness of both training and experimental activities. To others, it signaled the end to research and the careers of many professionals who had built a considerable base of both experience and expertise in the field. Full-time employment opportunities disappeared and the movement toward professionalization of the field was essentially diffused.

Over the next 4 years, according to Hunter and Harman (1979), state-sponsored discretionary funds were allocated on a project grant basis and were not part of an overall plan for equipping teachers. Hunter and Harman also cited a lack of formal exchange among various states, duplication of efforts within regions, and even no training programs at all.

A survey of former AESD regional project directors 4 years later (Parker 1979) noted that, although more staff development had taken place between 1974 and 1979 than ever before, "little is known" about the estimated 200 staff development projects or 300 special projects funded by the states each year during that 4-year period. Many noted that if program improvement was to occur, standards had to be set for ABE teaching including entry competencies and professional development requirements; the responsibility for staff development should remain with the universities and local programs while the state departments act as facilitators; local programs must play a far greater role in the assessment of training needs; self-directed learning by practitioners should be encouraged; and states should place "professionally experienced and trained adult educators" in positions of responsibility in state departments of education (ibid., pp. 22-26).

State-Supported Staff Development and Special Projects

One can very quickly become overwhelmed by the magnitude of the special project literature. In many cases, one could, and rightfully so, question the seriousness with which such projects were undertaken and funded by state directors, especially in light of the fact that little can be ascertained about their effectiveness. From 1974-79 approximately 2,000 projects, roughly 500 per year, were funded (Parker 1979).

In 1979 the National Conference of Adult Education State Directors discussed the problems found in the reporting and dissemination practices surrounding the special demonstration and staff development

projects (Schultz 1979). The following were most commonly identified:

1. Some reports, occasionally excellent ones much needed by the profession, are not reaching the dissemination systems.

2. Most reports are not properly designed to accommodate the reproduction requirements for dissemination and information retrieval systems; hence, their utility is limited.

3. Many reports are not reaching the practitioners. Significant reports in some cases are not disseminated within a state although the State Education Agency is the grantor. Consequently, useful ideas lose their adoptive impact because users and decision makers are not informed.

4. Many 309/310 reports are incomplete and this diminishes their usefulness.

The pace slowed somewhat in the 1980s, the lean years. The Office of Vocational and Adult Education's ***Catalog*** (Seibles 1984) and ***Digest of Adult Education Projects*** (1985) reveal that in those 2 years fewer than 800 projects were funded, dropping to approximately 350 in fiscal year 1986 with a total investment of nearly $8 million (Parker 1986). However, if dollar amounts awarded for individual projects are any indication, the scope and depth of the projects appeared to be dropping as well. Parker noted that, of the 350 projects funded in 1986, more than 100 were funded at $5,000 or less and an additional 84 for no more than $10,000. He suggested that the "low level of funding may prohibit quality development, packaging and dissemination of products" (p. 11).

Project evaluations were not a required component of 309/310 project reports (Schultz 1979). Neither were their outcomes, in spite of the fact that, in 1985 alone, 200 special projects were expected to deliver a product (OVAE 1985). Nor was their transferability to other programs considered an essential component. Dissemination, to other ABE programs within the funding state at a minimum or to sites in other states, did not appear to be a priority either. In addition to ERIC and Clearinghouse ADELL, only 13 states supported ABE dissemination networks, clearinghouses, or resource centers: New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, North Dakota, Virginia, Texas, California, Florida, and New Jersey (OVAE 1985).

What follows is a brief look at state-sponsored staff development, teacher training, special demonstration, and research efforts for the purpose of highlighting the various approaches taken since 1975 as the states attempted to respond to priorities established by the federal legislation as well as meet what they perceived were needs within their boundaries. As can be expected, they took many routes in doing so, a few with the help of comprehensive long-term plans. Others appeared to address these areas in a piecemeal fashion, and the efforts of still others simply do not surface in the literature. It should be mentioned that many reports do not indicate a source of funding, making it difficult to determine for certain whether or not adult education funds played a part. As a result, tracing the true impact of federally supported staff development, teacher training, special demonstration projects, and research is significantly hampered. Those noted here were selected based primarily upon this reviewer's ability to access and identify a variety of reports through the ERIC database and other sources and to make a cursory assessment of their significance.

Iowa

Like most states, Iowa had its work cut out for it: most teachers had "only about a year's experience in the program, and have had no previous professional preparation in Adult Education" (Mezirow 1975, p. 97). Shortly after assuming responsibility for staff development and special projects, the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction funded a project to identify administrative and management competencies for ABE program directors and instructional competencies for teachers (Mocker's 1974 competencies were used for teachers). Initial lists of competencies were developed and, using a modified Delphi technique, 167 competencies were identified for program administrators and 136 for teachers. They were then classified and ranked according their importance to the performance of one's role as administrator or teacher. An additional element, desired time for achieving each competency--at the beginning of an individual's career in ABE or later--was also assessed (Smith 1976).

By 1978 Iowa's staff development program had tied into the community college-based TELENET System, a communications system which linked all of Iowa's community colleges and vocational schools with audio-teleconferencing capabilities. The staff development delivery system included courses at area colleges, regional conferences and seminars and courses offered through TELENET, one of which was the Maryland video series, ***Basic Education: Teaching the Adult*** (Clearinghouse ADELL 1978). It is interesting to note that 13 years later, in 1991, only 8 states reported using teleconferencing and/or video to deliver at least a portion of their training activities (Pelavin Associates 1991a).

In 1983, in cooperation with the American Council on Education's GED Testing Service, Iowa successfully completed a 3-year study to improve its GED Testing System (Hartwig 1983). More recently, Iowa supported a series of studies examining Iowa's ESL students (Beder and Valentine 1987); reasons for nonparticipation of those adults who, although eligible for ABE, never enrolled (Beder 1990); and the motivational patterns of students enrolled in ABE (Beder and Valentine 1990).

Texas

The effort in Texas to develop a comprehensive approach to staff development began in 1972 and was supported by the Texas Education Agency. The result, developed over the course of the next 7 years, was a competency-based training program. Included in the program are the following (Fellenz 1981):

- A list of 55 competencies
- A teacher self-assessment instrument and observation guide
- 22 self-contained, multimedia learning modules
- A competency-based staff development plan that includes various delivery systems from individualized graduate courses to the use of an assessment instrument to focus workshop objectives
- A training component for adult basic education leaders who were to assist in the program
- A system for ongoing evaluation of training activities and experiences

Support from the Texas Education Agency was instrumental in the development and pilot testing of the APL diploma program

(Shelton 1980) and establishment of the Texas Renewal Education Network Dissemination System (TRENDS). One of the first statewide dissemination systems, TRENDS provided assistance to local programs in identifying and evaluating innovative curricula, instructional strategies, and other resources and integrating their use at the local program level. In 1989 the Adult Learning and Literacy Clearinghouse was established as a part of the Texas Center for Adult Literacy and Learning at Texas A&M University. The Clearinghouse disseminates information about special projects and other materials of interest to adult basic and literacy educators.

New Mexico

In 1978 the New Mexico Department of Education centralized staff development at the University of New Mexico and approached it from the point of view that in order to become effective it must become integrated into the overall priorities and purposes of the total organization and into the continuous process of program development and improvement (Bowes 1982). The establishment of the staff development program at the university was instrumental in linking academic knowledge to the improvement of practice. It provided accessible graduate study opportunities for practitioners and "first hand observation" (p. 185) for university staff, and it heightened the level of "professionalism" in ABE through out the state.

The university conducted multilevel and complementary approaches to needs assessment on a regular basis and provided for the involvement of ABE professionals in the development, delivery, and evaluation of staff development. Through the years New Mexico implemented a wide range of training experiences and related activities (Bowes 1982):

- Developing a nine-credit-hour requirement for a certificate in adult basic education for both undergraduate and graduate levels, including a supervised internship
- Establishing and facilitating site visits by teams of ABE staff
- Promoting curriculum development projects, summer institutes, and regional workshops
- Establishing a computer-based adult education resource center, graduate courses, and self-directed learning activities

California

California moved quickly toward competency-based staff development and has maintained that focus, fully integrating the concepts of CBAE at every level of programming from ESL, ABE, and GED to teacher training and staff development. The California Adult Competency Education (CACE) Project, funded with 309/310 resources, developed a process model of staff development for ABE teachers that included a series of awareness activities such as "CBE LIVE," a program that traveled the state presenting the major concepts of CBAE to over 400 adult educators in an "entertainment format . . . which fostered awareness at one level, while acting as a dissemination vehicle of CBAE at another" (Tibbetts and Westby-Gibson 1979, p. 202).

CACE also provided training to voluntary teacher/administrator teams in the actual writing of competency-based learning modules for students, during which they became familiar with the essential components such as the "parallellism of pre- and post-tests . . . objective-related activities and . . . performance standards" (ibid.,

p. 202); prepared teacher trainers, stressing that they must learn to model and demonstrate, through their own practice, the CBAE steps they were imparting to others; and disseminated the results of the CACE Project through publications and presentations and through the sponsorship of national conferences on competency-based adult education, the first in 1977 and a second in 1979.

The California Adult Competency Survey (CACS) was designed to provide the foundation for "identifying the basic educational needs of adults through an analysis of their performance on selected competency areas" (McCune 1979, p. 212). CACS, which expanded on the "definitional boundaries of the APL survey . . . is an advance in the field of competency-based education" (p. 213).

In 1982 California decided that the implementation of CBAE would be required of local agencies applying for federal grants and supported that mandate with projects in assessment, staff development, and dissemination. These activities were followed in quick succession by others including the California Competency-Based High School Diploma Program for Adults (CALCOMP) and the California Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), which was later adopted by Oregon (Lane 1991). Technological planning and implementation is being supported by the Outreach and Technical Assistance (OTAN) Center, which will serve as the "bellringer for coaxing, pushing, leading California's adult education agencies into the 21st century" (Miller 1990, p. 13). California is not shy about promoting its special demonstration and experimental projects far beyond its borders. Many of its most exemplary and innovative projects are marketed nationally.

Connecticut

Today the Adult Training and Development Network delivers services in the form of training, support, technical assistance, and follow-up for the Connecticut Adult Performance Program (CAPP). Previously called the Adult Education Staff Development Center, initiated in 1983, the network expands on the services available through the center to include workplace literacy programs and other areas. It houses an extensive collection of adult education materials; provides preservice and inservice training to local programs, including CAPP training workshops for basic skills and ESL instructors through the Connecticut Adult Educator Training Institute; assists in the development and dissemination of exemplary projects; conducts statewide workshops; and provides technical assistance through on-site visits, telephone consultation, and correspondence (Pelavin Associates 1991b).

Other Efforts

Individual states funded any number of newsletters; teacher, volunteer, and administrator handbooks; curriculum and training guides; and public awareness and recruitment guides. Other state-funded activities attempted to deal with staff development and dissemination of 310 activities through summer conferences or special publications.

In 1985, Virginia sponsored a Consultant Training Institute (CTI) and a Summer Adult Institute and Lyceum (SAIL), which provided week-long intensive courses in nine content areas related to ABE/ESL as well as 310 project dissemination sessions and other activities for 200 participants. Oregon developed a Talent Bank, which provided consulting and training services throughout the state, and Michigan

instituted the staff development collaborative, a comprehensive long-range staff development plan proposed to affect 600 practitioners statewide each year of full operation (Office of Vocational and Adult Education 1985).

One publication dealt with the question of quality and adaptability of special demonstration projects funded in Pennsylvania. *FOCUS on Curriculum* (Royce 1985) disseminated information about exemplary special demonstration projects developed over the preceding 10 years by the state. Themes such as employment, literacy, ESL, competency-based adult education, and special populations were used to guide the selection of projects. Featured projects and their products were first reviewed by a statewide panel of adult educators who judged the projects according to effectiveness, innovative qualities, and adoptability and selected 35 they considered to be exemplary and worthy of dissemination to local programs in its first year of publication. Later bulletins concentrated on program management and workplace literacy.

Other efforts to evaluate and assess the impact of special projects were carried out in Florida and Virginia. The Florida study (Office of Vocational and Adult Education 1987) found that teacher training and special projects had made a "significant contribution to improve adult education activities" in the state, most notably in solving problems in individual programs, recruitment, and retention. Staff development reported a broader range of impact than special demonstration projects, due primarily to inadequate dissemination of even the most exemplary projects.

A longitudinal study in Virginia (ibid.) compared data gathered in 1970, 1978, and 1985. Data showed, for example, that there was a significant difference in ratings of inservice programs over the 15-year span with 73 percent of supervisors (up from 29.6 percent in 1970) and 60.1 percent of teachers (up from 35.5 percent in 1970) rating inservice programs as adequate. Supervisors' participation in regional institutes and workshops increased by 69.6 percent over 1970 and their participation in college credit courses increased by 31.2 percent. Participation for teachers in those two activities increased 42.5 percent and 26 percent respectively. Unfortunately, no effort was made in this publication to discover the reasons for the improved ratings or increased participation, or the impact of either at the local program level.

Among the other activities, staff development needs assessments were conducted in Washington (Stafford 1981) and Iowa (Smith 1980), competencies for teachers of adult basic education were assessed in Florida (Nunes and Halloran 1987), and impact studies were conducted in Kentucky (Moore 1980), Pennsylvania (Godbey and Mohsenin 1982), Indiana (New Educational Directions 1982), Montana (Mahaffy 1983), and New Jersey (Darkenwald and Valentine 1984). Statewide evaluations were conducted in Kentucky (Morehead State University 1987) and North Carolina (Fingeret et al. 1985). Still others examined retention, collaborative partnerships, the acceptance and credibility of the GED in business and industry, dropouts, high risk students, and adults with learning disabilities.

In summary, over the last 15 years, literally thousands of staff development and special demonstration projects have been funded by the states. In some cases, these efforts were conceived and directed by individuals or agencies skilled in the thoughtful development of innovations, the conduct of research, and its application to the field. Some can even be viewed as making substantial contributions

to the advancement of the ABE. In other cases, it appears that the hundreds of $5,000 and $10,000 special demonstration projects funded may simply be serving as a substitute for local program staff development and training or as a means of providing planning, curriculum development, revision, and preparation time, all of which are regularly denied to part-time employees.

However, the purpose of this aspect of ABE is to develop both the knowledge base and the human resources necessary to support and advance the field as a whole. Since the dismantling of the regional projects, the staff development and special demonstration program appears to have operated without a clearly stated set of standards or guiding principles. Without any substantive effort to evaluate the worth or measure the usefulness, relevance, or impact of staff development programs and special demonstration projects and products, low expectations led to any number of poor quality projects. Without a credible evaluation component, projects become insignificant in light of the overriding issues and concerns that remain. The apparent inability of the current system, then, to examine and acknowledge either its strengths or its weaknesses means that neither get adequately addressed. Neglecting this component has contributed greatly to the perception that ABE cannot do the job.

BARRIERS TO PROGRESS

Any number of challenges hamper the ability of states to handle adequately program development, the training of staff, and the development and dissemination of innovative resources and demonstration projects.

The Priority of the Day

First, although ABE staff development has not undergone radical changes over the years, the ABE program has experienced numerous shifts in what is to be taught, to whom, and where. Most of these changes were mandated by the federal legislation, which ensured that program development and improvement, staff development, and special demonstration efforts were locked in a reactive posture rather than a proactive one. None of the priorities have been addressed adequately, so they continue to add up. As a result, the issues surrounding staff development and dissemination of innovation and research seem even more insurmountable.

Changes in Target Population

The original target population in both the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and the Adult Education Act of 1966 included those 18 years of age and over who had completed less than 8 years of schooling. In 1969 the target group was expanded to include those 16 years of age and older and extended to those with less than a 12th-grade education (Cook 1977). In 1978 it was further expanded to include preparation for the high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) exam and to include all adults with or without a high school diploma if they lacked sufficient basic skills to function effectively in society (Rossman, Fisk, and Roehl 1984). The 1988 amendments to the act direct the states to give priority to the "educationally disadvantaged," adults performing at the lowest ability level (*Adult Education Act of 1966: 1988 Amendments* 1988).

Special Populations

Special populations entered the picture in 1972 when the federal legislation cited Native Americans. In 1973 older Americans emerged as a target population followed by bilingual and limited English speaking adults in 1974, Indochinese refugees in 1976, and institutionalized adults in 1978 (Rossman et al. 1984). More recently, literacy efforts for those in the work force who lack basic skills and family literacy have moved to the fore as well as programs for people who are institutionalized and incarcerated, new non-English speaking immigrants, and homeless persons.

Changes in Program Sponsors

The original legislation restricted program sponsorship and funding to public schools and later to local education agencies (LEAs). The most recent legislation authorizes funding, in addition to the LEA, to public or private nonprofit agencies, organizations, and institutions and

requires only that the LEA be consulted and have an opportunity to comment on the proposal for funding. The LEA is no longer required to serve as the prime sponsor and fiscal agent. For-profit organizations, for the first time, may become involved if they are a member of a contract-based consortium that includes a local education agency. This change opened the program to community-based organizations, libraries, business and industry, and other private and public organizations (Hartman 1988).

Changes in Curriculum

Until the mid-1970s, instructional objectives were fairly straightforward. They focused on teaching reading, computation (math), and English. The APL study added subject matter and skills based on the types of reading, writing, and computation tasks most likely to be needed in adulthood and gave impetus to competency-based adult education and teacher training (Parker and Taylor 1980) and competency-based high school diploma programs (Shelton 1980). The need for adult-oriented approaches to basic skills instruction was also highlighted (Chisman 1989). Jorgenson (1988) noted three more recent developments that have altered ABE:

1. The changes in the 1988 GED Test, which require a writing sample and problem-solving and higher level thinking skills.

2. Computer literacy, as an increasing number of programs introduce computer-assisted instruction in their programs.

3. The dramatic increase in the numbers of functionally illiterate adults, nonreaders, who are enrolling in local programs as a result of the national literacy awareness campaigns and the 1988 amendments that give priority to that target population.

Many of the latter group are found to be learning disabled or dyslexic and have had difficulties with literacy since the early elementary grades (Chall, Heron, and Hilferty 1987). With the addition of funds through the 1988 amendments to the Adult Education Act, Section 371, to develop programs and curricula to upgrade the basic skills of those who are employed, additional knowledge and skills particular to workplace literacy will also be necessary (Taylor 1989).

The various digests and directories of teacher training and special demonstration projects published over the years reveal that most states dutifully responded to the ever changing priorities in the legislation. In most cases, they barely had a chance to lay the groundwork for change, let alone bring about lasting change in any one particular area before the next set of priorities came barreling down the pike.

Standard Operating Procedures

A second set of factors that inhibits the field is the lack of nationally agreed upon standards and expectations. The recent *Study of ABE/ESL Instructor Training Approaches* by Pelavin Associates (1991a,b) cites such factors as a lack of consistent training requirements, noting that they vary from as little as a few hours per year to as much as 50 hours. Only 12 states require some form of preservice or inservice training.

To complicate matters even further, widely accepted principles of staff development are generally ignored at the state level. Harman (1985) reaffirmed what has been known for years: The teaching of adults is no less an art and profession

than the instruction of children and requires special knowledge and skills. Commenting on the limited scope and intensity of teacher training efforts and the lack of a systemwide mechanism for research and development, he added that, without research, stronger curricula, appropriate instructional approaches, and teacher training, it is unlikely that ABE can upgrade its methods, enhance its outreach, or improve its results.

Tibbetts and Hemphill (1985) noted that, over the years, staff development has been characterized by several practices that do not produce lasting change, all of which were reconfirmed in the 1991 study of ABE/ESL training activities by Pelavin Associates. These practices are as follows:

- A lack of needs assessment or adequate evaluation design
- One-shot presentations, even if well done
- Administratively determined content
- Presentations by outsiders or by persons skilled in a single technique, both usually unable to relate to local programs as a whole
- Presentations that are piecemeal rather than planned to bring about systematic change over a period of time

Finally, a 1988 study by Crocker revealed that just five states have statewide ABE staff development programs that appeared to meet widely accepted conceptual frameworks for staff development.

Entry-level competencies also remain vague, blurred by such expectations as dedication, empathy, and commitment. Certification requirements vary across the country. Adult certification is required in 11 states; elementary or secondary certification is required in 14; and no certification at all is required by the remaining 25 (Pelavin Associates 1991b).

Staffing Patterns

A third set of factors presents far more serious challenges. In spite of the work undertaken over the last 25 years, the state of the ABE teacher has not changed and to some extent has worsened. According to Hartman (1988) the "typical" practicing adult educator is new to the position, has little or no coursework in adult education, comes from a field outside of adult education, is likely to leave it in 5 years, and works very hard. ABE paid instructors remain moonlighting elementary and secondary teachers who have "no special training in teaching adults" (Skagen 1986, p. 51) and whose instructional approaches are much like those they are accustomed to using with children.

Worse yet, the national ABE work force remains largely part time. OVAE (1988) reports that in 1986-87, of the 43,230 teachers employed in ABE only 5,239, or about 12 percent, were full time. More recent figures reveal that 94 percent of teachers are part time, and 40 percent are unpaid volunteers (Beder 1991) and that the number of full-time teachers has declined by 48 percent since 1980 (Pugsley 1990). Chisman (1989) noted that few programs pay a competitive wage or offer benefits. He found that it is difficult to criticize ABE teachers because so little effort has been made to translate the results of either experience or research and make it available in usable forms to those in the ABE classrooms.

Who manages these programs? Who supervises, supports, and encourages the

professional development of these teachers and volunteers? In 1986-87 there were only 2,288 full-time, paid, local-level administrative, supervisory, and ancillary personnel in the country and roughly 1,300 of them were employed in just four states. An additional 3,888 individuals were employed part time in these capacities. In that same year there were 274 full-time state-level personnel (OVAE 1988).

In the meantime, ABE is further obscured by the fanfare surrounding the unprecedented national literacy awareness campaign of the 1980s. Section 353 of the current legislation allows states to spend up to 10 percent of the state grant for special projects, including teacher **and** volunteer training. In 1988, $1.5 million was spent by 25 states for volunteer training (Pelavin Associates 1991b). However, Kazemek (1988) asserted that by "continuing to support volunteer programs based on one-to-one tutoring, we continue to undermine any substantial change in the way adult literacy education is offered in the United States" (p. 473).

According to Beder (1991), the "overreliance on part-time teachers and volunteers is anathema" (p. 135). Beder stated that a part-time work force has a lower capacity for professional development than does a full-time one, that part-time instructors interact less frequently, and that this lack of communication "precludes the sharing of information and new ideas" (p. 134). He further noted that because they generally have another full-time role, their investment in professional growth is more apt to be made there than in ABE, and that many teachers simply do not have the skills and knowledge to do the job. "Generally speaking, part-time teachers arrive, teach, and then leave" (p. 135).

Is it any wonder that the field experiences a high teacher turnover rate? Or that information, "best practices," experimentation, and innovation cannot find their way to the classroom?

Essentially, staffing patterns are left in the hands of the states and at some point the states must begin to grapple earnestly with the difficult questions surrounding the structure, or rather the lack of structure, of the ABE work force. Can the field, which is for all intents and purposes part time and volunteer, really effect change in how and what is taught? Can the field adjust "how and what" in ways that adequately serve the illiterate and undereducated adults, the work force and the workplace, and people who have learning disabilities or are disabled, institutionalized and incarcerated, unemployed, homeless, non-English speaking, and poverty stricken?

Can a field whose work force experiences a high turnover rate at its most critical juncture--the very point of delivery--retain adult learners long enough to have some impact on the quality of their lives and on the economic stability of the country, if the field cannot retain those charged with the task? Can ABE expect to make any progress at all if the number of students served is placed above the quality of the service provided? It is likely every student enrolled can be far better served if the ABE teacher is adequately prepared, is able to maintain a professional relationship with supervisors and peers, has opportunities for ongoing professional development and growth, and is provided with guidance, assistance, and supervision designed to foster continued growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Reliance on part-time staff and volunteers and the high turnover rate that accompanies both have become so ingrained into the field that it seems difficult to perceive it any other way. As it accepts so many of its shortcomings, ABE accepts this curse, calling it "the nature of the field." Nearly every major study of adult basic and literacy education from the earliest days of its existence comments upon the low number of full-time staff (and more recently on the decline in full-time staff) and/or the tremendous increase in the numbers of part-time teachers and volunteers (Beder 1991; Chisman 1990; Hunter and Harman 1979; Mezirow 1975; Pelavin Associates 1991a; and Spear et al. 1972a).

Only Beder saw it as a serious weakness. Chisman observed that the part-time nature of the field prevents its professionalization, but suggested that it can be addressed later. The Pelavin report, like so many others, suggested that "the challenge for the field is to design, **within the constraints of the ABE and ESL delivery system** [emphasis added], a suitable training delivery system that provides training on appropriate topics" (p. 62).

However, accepting the field of ABE as it exists today is not the answer. What ABE must do is examine every aspect of the delivery system, its own infrastructure, **its context**, so to speak, and develop the means to reduce considerably the barriers that have plagued the field throughout its history. As suggested by Boggs and Travis (1983), "ABE remains the antithesis of a tightly organized or 'rationalistic' model of education" (p. 32). The addition of new and varied sponsoring agencies and the decrease in full-time employees, coupled with the increase in part-time staff and volunteers, have only made matters worse. Further, it appears that the "deficit model" can be applied to the field just as some suggest it is applied to the learner. The professional structure of the field is being strangled at a critical juncture, and the "fault" lies with the victim, in this case the part-time teacher and volunteer.

Increase Full-Time Positions

Full-time positions should be increased at every level of program operation. This is not the 1960s and funding is not in constant jeopardy any more. Because there is real work to be done, these positions must be filled by professionally trained and experienced adult basic educators. Until the field substantially increases its commitment to full-time leadership and offers career paths to those who readily and competently chose adult basic and literacy education as a place to devote their time and energies, it cannot begin to influence what happens in the classroom.

It also appears that the field needs a new type of position, one that can serve to bridge the gap between research, innovation, and training on the one end and the classroom on the other end. This position could serve as the conduit for information, a source of ideas, and a supporter of experimentation, linking the part-time

classroom teacher with the resources necessary to bring about change.

Lutz (1981) described the "linker" personality as one who is well informed, who indicates a preference to work with people first and foremost and to contribute to positive group morale. Linkers are warm hearted, somewhat assertive, conscientious, experimenting, and inclined to problem solving. They work well with both teachers and administrators and, in order to establish local commitment to problem solving, must maintain productive interpersonal relationships with both. They adjust to environmental difficulties, are group oriented, have a tendency to break tradition, and are more intellectually adaptable and imaginative than the general population. Most important, they use their imaginative skills to apply knowledge gained from research and practice to a number of settings that vary greatly in their resource needs.

The competencies necessary for effective performance of such a role can be found in Ulin's 1976 analysis of the role of staff development specialist. They include--

-- an understanding that staff development occurs in organizational settings;

-- an understanding that the "clients" to be served include both educators of adults and the organizations within which they function;

-- an understanding that both organizations and individuals have needs, goals, expectations, and values related to staff development that must be clearly articulated in order for a rational planning process to occur;

-- an understanding that individual and organizational goals, needs, expectations, and values can sometimes conflict, assisting those involved in confronting this reality and in developing coping strategies;

-- an awareness that the results of this process of clarification and articulation will be unique to each organization and individual involved in the program;

-- knowledge of and ability to use a variety of strategies to assist the organization in the process of gathering information about its goals for staff development;

-- an understanding of the need for developing trust relationships with the client organization and with individual participants in order to facilitate the flow of accurate information about learning problems and needs;

-- a recognition that there is formal and informal structure within the various organizations, that both play a role in setting staff development goals and in developing plans for reaching them;

-- an ability to use a variety of strategies for involving both informal and formal groups in all stages of program planning and implementation;

-- the ability to identify, confront, and resolve "turf-protecting" behaviors; and

-- an understanding of both the proactive and reactive nature of the role: reactive in attentively and appropriately responding to identified needs, proactive in establishing an environment that nurtures inquiry,

dialogue, exploration, and experimentation.

Ulin wisely added that the individual should be able to work in an environment with a high degree of ambiguity, should be comfortable viewing success in relative terms (such expectations as "full cooperation," "total commitment," and "complete success" are unrealistic), and should be able to work without immediate feedback--program and individual change and growth takes time.

This "linker," who might have the title of "staff development liaison" (or specialist), should be field based, but have direct ties to the state/regional resource centers, direct access to ABE programs and, most important of all, to ABE classrooms. On the local program level, such individuals can orient new teachers to adult learners, adult-appropriate methodology, and materials. They can provide cost-effective, individualized support for the first-year teacher. They can add vitality and substance to program development and improvement by helping programs stay informed about special demonstration projects and innovations, assisting in the selection and review of such resources and with the adaptation/adoption process, if appropriate. They can help design, plan, coordinate, and evaluate local teacher training efforts and provide inservice follow-up support and guidance. Staff development liaisons can help experienced part-time staff engage in self-directed or guided independent study, "linking" them to distant experts and resources while serving as onsite peer tutors, coaches, and mentors.

As a part of statewide efforts, staff development liaisons can assist with ongoing program evaluation. They can conduct ongoing needs assessments and help guide state-sponsored training programs. They can encourage participation in state-sponsored staff development activities by keeping teachers aware of what resources are available and how and when to tap into them. Most important, they can provide the follow-up to inservice training that is missing in the current system, assisting teachers with feedback, giving them the guidance and the recognition that is so sorely needed when change in day-to-day planning, development, and delivery of the instructional program is the ultimate goal.

By focusing on similarities among local programs, identifying common needs and interests, and establishing channels of communication, staff development liaisons can break down the disparities and barriers that arise when only differences are known, and they can serve as problem solvers and change agents, which is, after all, what staff development is all about.

Such individuals can do more than simply serve local programs, they can serve the field. Staff development liaisons could play a major role in reducing the high teacher turnover rate, which in turn could have an impact on student progress and retention rates. They will serve to "link" theory to practice and to "link" together a fragmented system by giving local programs and part-time teachers a professional identity, a sense that they are a part of something bigger than what they see at the local level and that they count. Ultimately, they could serve to accelerate the professionalization of the field.

As the staff development projects of the 1970s demonstrated, change takes time. The individuals serving in such roles, although they must have experience in adult basic and literacy education, will need extensive training and preparation (organizational and human resource development) as well as solid support at all levels. It will take time for the field to adjust. Everyone--from state directors and

state staff to local program directors, teachers, and volunteers as well as college and university graduate faculty--will need to learn how to relate to and make use of this new multifaceted role.

Improve Staff Development and Teacher Training

Staff development and teacher training is fraught with problems. Yet the knowledge and resources necessary to improve the program are available and even close at hand.

Principles and Techniques for Staff Development

In 1985 the National ABE Staff Development Consortium (NABESDC) began as a "discussion among a few ABE staff development professionals at a conference." Many of them felt isolated in their training and research activities, an all too common complaint in ABE. They met again at the 1985 and 1986 National Adult Education Conference and by 1987 the group was 85 members strong, individuals with national, state, regional, and local staff development responsibilities in 33 states, including some of the best in the business. Now recognized as a program unit of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), the consortium engaged in a collaborative research project. The result, ***Principles and Techniques for Effective Staff Development*** and an accompanying ***Self-Study Guide*** (NABESDC 1987), although in need of polishing, refinement, and testing (does it work on the state, regional, and/or local level?), is a good beginning. With funding from the new National Center on Adult Literacy, revision should be the consortium's next task.

Staff Development Models

Recognizing that no single model would be acceptable or appropriate to all the states, NABESDE should begin to research the various staff development models currently in existence in the field. Because ABE is no longer wholly based in the public schools, models from outside of the field, particularly those that effectively serve part-time employees, should be examined as well. Detailed analysis should be made of the elements that are present and how they might be adapted to fit the administrative and program delivery systems of various states. Models should be described in detail, including philosophy statements, goals and objectives, needs assessment strategies, roles and responsibilities of various players, approaches, and so on.

Construct Incentives and Break Down Barriers

Staying in the "context" of ABE, participation in staff development and training activities is generally low. Research needs to be conducted to identify both the motivating and de-motivating factors that either encourage participation or create apathy toward professional development among ABE teachers and administrators. Recognizing that human beings need to be rewarded for their efforts and that unyielding dedication and commitment are unrealistic (not to mention highly judgmental) expectations, what do part-time ABE teachers need in the way of recognition and acknowledgment? Several studies have been conducted on this and related questions.

For example, Bowes (1982) in his research on staff development found that some of the most common barriers to success are the participants' feeling that there is undue pressure to change, that their life

schedules are overcrowded, that there is likelihood of criticism, and that the activities themselves are vague. Other obstacles include lack of money/sufficient funding, general apathy, poor planning, and lack of communication between administrators and teachers.

On the other hand, Bowes suggested that incentives to participation can be constructed by ensuring that participants see a reason for engaging in the activity, that they accomplish something, that they receive support from fellow participants, and that the recognized changes that occur fulfill their intended purposes. He also found that participation can be enhanced if growth demonstrated is related to the institutional reward system, if there is evidence of widespread support from supervisors, and if risk taking and experimentation are encouraged and supported.

Does Bowes' work hold up today, in the 1990s? Do these factors operate across the board or do they differ among experienced and inexperienced teachers? Among staff in rural and urban programs? Among programs with varying sponsors, such as community-based, public school-based, community college, institutional, and industry-based programs? If so, how do they differ? Answers to such questions can not only help ABE increase participation in training and staff development activities but also reduce the turnover rate.

Reduce Turnover

Any profession with a high turnover rate should ask a number of questions. Who makes up the teaching force? What is known about part-time ABE teachers? Why are they working in ABE? What motivates them to take on a second job? This job? Is the "social consciousness" of the 1960s still a prevailing force or are they really interested in bringing in a second income, making a living, paying the rent? And most of all why do they stay and why do they leave? What can ABE do to keep the good ones? If ABE cannot promise them all full-time jobs, benefits, and the like, what can it offer? The field needs to understand the "perks" and find ways to offer them.

Research, Special Projects, and the Common Good

Although there is no question that much new research needs to be done, too often promising research is conducted or innovative special projects are funded and left to die on the vine. ABE has come to the point where "one-upsmanship" has to take a back seat and collaboration for the common good should take over. Either the National Center on Adult Literacy or the newly formed National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium of State Directors (or better yet, both) should take the lead in identifying, selecting, and funding research and demonstration projects worthy of further study and replication.

Two cases come to mind immediately: the recent collection of work done by Beder (1990) and Beder and Valentine (1987, 1990) in Iowa on nonparticipation in ABE, the motivational profiles of ABE students, and profiles of ESL students; and the recent study by D'Amico-Samuels (1990) on the motivation, recruitment, and retention of African Americans. If replicated and further validated, such work has potential for making major contributions, enabling better understanding of the learners who come to class and those who do not.

What has been offered here is just a sampling of the kind of work that must be done, the kind of work that began in

the years of the regional projects but was stopped short, just as it began to bear fruit. And while doing so ABE must avoid the pitfalls that seem to pervade the field: the inability to acknowledge both its strengths and weaknesses; the inability to admit to similarities while so easily pointing out the differences--between states; between public, private, for-profit and nonprofit program sponsors; between paid and volunteer, full-time and part-time personnel and learners; and, finally, the resistance to professionalizing ABE because it may even out the playing field. Otherwise, we may look back 25 years from now and find just more of the same.

SUMMARY

Staff development, teacher training, special demonstration projects, and research in adult basic education began on tenuous footing at best and essentially remain so. It would appear that no one, including the field itself, was prepared for what was to come with the passage of the Adult Education Act of 1966. The U.S. Office of Education remained a strong player for the first 10 years or so, steering the agenda, setting priorities, and funding a large majority of the efforts to build a resource and research base. Although at times appearing "heavy handed," USOE encouraged collaboration, making a strong effort through the regional projects to bring together state departments of education and college and university adult education graduate faculty, and to direct their combined efforts toward meeting the needs and concerns of the field at large and of those at the local level. These efforts were generally viewed as suspect by state directors, who lobbied successfully for full control of resource development at every level. They argued that the dissimilarities among the states far outweighed the similarities, thus making collaboration and cooperation next to impossible.

The downfall of the regional projects was a major turning point for ABE. It signaled an end to a move towards professionalization of ABE at all levels and dismantled many of the partnerships that had begun to materialize between higher education and the field at large. It triggered an almost "isolationist" attitude on the part of most states, as each went its own way with its piece of the pie.

Although some states have ventured forth in a variety of ways, most staff development is taking place without the benefit of a clear picture of how it should be done, if and when it is effective, or even if there is a benefit somewhere along the way for the teacher or most of all for the ABE student. Staff development often misses its mark because widely accepted principles are essentially ignored. Broad, generalized approaches are taken that all too often leave the adaptation, implementation, and other related decisions in the hands of professionally isolated local programs and poorly trained, underpaid, part-time teachers or volunteers.

Indiscriminate funding of literally thousands of special demonstration projects continues, without any real effort to set standards, measure their impact, or examine their value beyond the state or local program level. There is little if any effort nationally or among the states to test or validate research, evaluate even the most promising special demonstration projects, or examine staff development and teacher training practices.

Instead, 50 separate states are doing their own thing. Essentially, most state directors carve their share of the pie into small, unconnected, and unconvincing special projects and weak, isolated, and unvalidated teacher training efforts. When viewed as part of the "big" picture, most appear to be insignificant. That practice, coupled with the disintegration of full-time employment opportunities, results in a field that is lacking in both substance and leadership. New ideas and innova-

tions are not brought to the fore, where they can be tested and disseminated. Potential leaders do not rise to the surface.

Except for sporadic and isolated cases, since the close of the regional staff development projects in 1975, little has been done to develop, support, or even encourage adequate leadership at the national, state, or local levels in ABE. The field of adult basic education sadly remains unsophisticated. The value, legitimacy, and acceptance of those who work in ABE, as well as those who learn in ABE, continues to be in question. Furthermore, we come very close to blaming the "victims," the teachers and the learners, for the failure of the policy makers and the decision makers to make a commitment to improve and advance the field for the benefit of all.

In the meantime, reports and studies abound calling for increased staff development, teacher training, innovative projects, and research, all of which may only continue to get lost in that vast wasteland that exists between the resources and those who need them most--the teachers and the learners.

Others call for setting standards for practice, requiring participation in preservice and inservice activities. All of these are necessary; however, under the current system, will part-time teachers, and all that implies, be willing to accept such conditions? Can change be forced upon them when there is too often no support available once they return to the classroom? What is the payoff for them and can ABE supply it?

Part-time teachers and volunteers will no doubt always remain the staple of adult basic education and, in the opinion of most, should. They meet an essential need for flexibility and diversity. On the other hand, by ignoring what is known to be true about teacher training and allowing the ratio of full-time to part-time employees and volunteers to get so out of control, ABE is fragmented and dysfunctional. Finally, the field must address the most difficult question of all: quantity of students served versus quality of service provided.

The National Literacy Act of 1991 increases considerably the federal government's commitment to adult literacy and basic education and does so in some very promising ways. In addition to an anticipated increase in funding, it creates a National Institute for Literacy to address basic and applied research, provide training and program assistance, disseminate "best" practices and develop measures of performance and program effectiveness. To link the National Institute to state and local programs, the legislation provides for the establishment of state/regional resource centers to provide training, technical support, and coordination as well as encourage government-industry partnerships. It also increases the amount of funds set aside for innovative projects and training to 15 percent of the total state grant and requires the states to spend two-thirds of those funds on teacher training and staff development.

However, without an increase in full-time professional leadership, major changes in the way the field is structured and across-the-board improvements in staff development and teacher training, chances are good that the same issues will still be raised 10 or even 25 years from now.

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